



# United States Department of Interior

Fish & Wildlife Service  
Lower Great Lakes Fishery Resources Office  
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Amherst, New York 14228



## LOWER GREAT LAKES FISHERY RESOURCES OFFICE

# MONTHLY PROGRESS REPORT April 2002



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### LGLFRO Staff

Chris Castiglione, GIS Specialist  
Dan deRoos, Fish and Wildlife Biologist  
Jeff Diers, Biological Technician  
Kofi Fynn-Aikins, Chief  
Sandra Keppner, Invasive Species Coordinator  
Mike Sowinski, Biological Technician  
Gail Testa, Administrative Officer  
Betsy Trometer, Fishery Biologist  
Gwen Warren, Office Automation Assistant  
Maureen Waterman, Biological Technician  
Mike Weimer, Fishery Biologist

### Volunteers

Zach Dylong, Mike Jerla.

### LAKE STURGEON RESTORATION

Mike W., Emily Zollweg (Alpena FRO), Mike S., and volunteer Zach Dylong sampled for lake sturgeon using baited setlines in the lower Niagara River (4/29-5/2). No lake sturgeon were captured. A dock and fish pen were installed for the 2002 field season along the river's shoreline to facilitate processing of captured sturgeon.

Mike W. submitted a report to USFWS Region 3 summarizing LGLFRO 2001 lake sturgeon activities conducted cooperatively with Lake Erie commercial fishers.

### GREAT LAKES BASIN ECOSYSTEM TEAM

Sandra participated in the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem Team Executive Committee (ExComm) conference call (4/1). The ExComm discussed plans for the upcoming retreat and full Team meeting. Agenda items and guest speakers were identified.

Sandra attended the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem Team ExComm retreat in East Lansing, MI (4/16-17). Retreat discussions focused on the role of the Ecosystem Team, the status and needs of Team committees, and renewing Project Leader and staff support and participation. Additional focus areas for Committee development were identified by the ExComm. The agenda for the full Team meeting was revised to reflect retreat discussions.

Chris participated in two Geographic Information System/Decision Support System (GIS/DSS) committee conference calls (4/4 & 4/18) to assist with the completion of the GIS/DSS Strategic Report.

### LAKE ONTARIO

Betsy and co-investigator, Gary Neuderfer (NYSDEC, Region 9) completed the Quality Assurance Project Plan for the EPA funded project, *Contaminant Analysis in the Rochester Embayment Area of Concern*. Sediment and benthic macroinvertebrate sampling is scheduled to begin in July.

Betsy attended a Lake Ontario Biomonitoring Coordination meeting at the Cornell Biological Field Station (4/26). The sampling protocol was reviewed and equipment was cleaned and left for calibration. Sampling is scheduled to begin in May.

## **INVASIVE SPECIES PROGRAM**

### **Coordination**

Sandra participated in the special symposium, *Aquatic Nuisance Species Management in the Northeast*, at the 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Northeast Fish and Wildlife Conference in Portland, ME (4/24).

Sandra gave a presentation entitled *National Aquatic Nuisance Species Perspectives and Programs*.

Sandra participated in the ANS Regional Coordinator conference call (4/2). Staff from the Washington Office Invasive Species Branch provided updates on the reauthorization of the National Invasive Species Act, state management plan funding and reporting requirements, and ANS Task Force operational changes.

Sandra participated in a conference call led by Pennsylvania Sea Grant to discuss Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) training plans and options for the Northeast Region (4/9). Staff from NCTC were contacted to discuss the possibility of holding a Northeast training session at NCTC.

Sandra reviewed and provided comments on the proposal, *Non-native Oysters in the Chesapeake Bay*, prepared by the National Academy of Sciences. Sandra is working with staff from the Regional Office and the Chesapeake Bay Field Office to address concerns regarding openwater aquaculture of the Asian oyster, *Crassostrea ariakensis*, in the Chesapeake Bay.

Sandra submitted required forms to the Regional Office External Affairs requesting approval to develop and print the fact sheet, *Water Gardens and Introduced Species*. The request was approved 4/16. Draft text and selected images were forwarded to the Regional Graphics Coordinator.

### **Round Goby**

Jeff gave the presentation, *Round Goby Research in Lake Erie, NY*, at the 2002, State of Lake Erie Program, in Blasdell, NY (4/13).

### **Contaminants**

Jeff met with Mike Perry (Columbia Analytical Services) to discuss analysis of round goby tissue samples for Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbon (4/17). This is part of an investigation of bioaccumulation of contaminants in round goby.

## **HABITAT EVALUATION/RESTORATION**

Mike W. attended a meeting of the Seneca Bluffs Wetland Restoration Committee Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) in Buffalo, NY (4/23). Comments on a draft aquatic habitat restoration plan were discussed. The LGLFRO agreed to conduct a preliminary fish community survey at the site (Buffalo River) to support in-stream restoration design planning.

Mike W. provided a progress report on the study, *The Calibration of Remote Sensing Imagery*, to the International Joint Commission. This multi-agency study is examining the effects of changing water levels on Lake Ontario and St. Lawrence River coastal marshes.

Mike W. conducted a stream site survey in the Eighteenmile Creek watershed in Erie County (Springville, NY)(4/24). The survey targeted benthic invertebrates, fish, and habitat information, and was conducted using the EPA "Rapid Bioassessment Protocol". Results will be forwarded to the Erie County and Soil and Water Conservation District (ECSWCD) for consideration in restoration planning.

## **FISH AND WILDLIFE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (FEDERAL LANDS)**

### **Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station (NFARS)**

Dan and Maureen met with Jim Mathews (914th Civil Engineering) to discuss the newly planned projects at NFARS (4/2).

Maureen and Dan conducted Raptor Spot Mapping. A Northern Harrier was seen on base performing a territorial display. Dan and Maureen also confirmed active Red-tailed Hawk nest locations.

### **Fort Drum**

Mike W. forwarded a draft version of the angler information poster and the tag reporting form to Fort Drum for review and comment. The poster will be installed this spring at the angler information kiosk at Indian Lake. A fish data card will be provided to anglers summarizing biological information for fish that have been tagged and released by the LGLFRO.

Betsy submitted the proposal, *Walleye movement and habitat utilization in Indian Lake and Indian*

*River and larval fish assessment in Indian River*, for a study that would start in the fall and continue through the following summer.

### **GIS AND DATABASE MANAGEMENT**

Chris participated in two Region 5 GIS Coordination Team Spatial Data Library conference calls to assist in developing the Region 5 GIS Strategic plan (4/2, 23).

Chris participated in the Great Lakes Aquatic Gap conference call to review and edit the proposal for the New York State Riverine Gap and Great Lakes Coastal Gap projects (4/9).

### **EDUCATION AND OUTREACH**

Mike W. and Mary Alice Tocke (Cornell Cooperative Extension) gave the presentation, *The Effect of Non-indigenous Invasive Species on Biodiversity* at the Erie County “Envirothon”, a one-day educational workshop sponsored by the ECSWCD in Sardinia, NY (4/10).

Mike W. and Jeff participated in the “Earth Day Expo”, at Buffalo State College (Buffalo, NY) (4/20). The display consisted of posters highlighting office projects and species of interest, as well as a free-standing display showing non-native (*Phragmites australis*) versus native (cattail) plant species interactions. An estimated 1,500 people attended the event.

Kofi gave a presentation about the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s role and responsibilities in the Great Lakes basin to law students and faculty at the State University of New York at Buffalo (4/9). The presentation was part of the Law School Environmental Colloquium.

Kofi met with Drs. Randy Snyder and Howard Riessen to discuss how the Lower Great Lakes Fishery Resources Office can provide internship and other educational opportunities for students at Buffalo State College, Buffalo, NY (4/23).

### **OTHER**

Mike W. attended the New York State Wetlands Forum annual meeting in Syracuse, NY (4/17). Presentations covered current wetland habitat restoration techniques and ongoing projects, as well as potential opportunities for interagency collaboration on future wetland-related endeavors.

Kofi attended the Council of Lake Committees meeting near Detroit, MI (4/24). Attendees discussed Great Lakes basin-wide issues, including impacts of invasive species, the Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act, and lake trout rehabilitation.

Kofi met with Jay Burney (Learning and Sustainability Council) to discuss community participation in developing the Friends of the Lower Great Lakes (4/18). The mission of the Friends group will be to work with the office to promote responsible stewardship of the Lower Great Lakes watershed and ecosystem.

Chris provided the Region 5 Fish Passage accomplishments (1999 - 2001) to the National Fish Passage Coordinator for inclusion into the National Fish Passage Program Accomplishments Report.

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THIS MONTHLY REPORT PROVIDES A BRIEF, IN-HOUSE REPORT ON RECENT ACTIVITIES, ISSUES OR EVENTS OF THE LOWER GREAT LAKES OFFICE. ITS CONTENTS SHOULD NOT BE USED OR CITED ELSEWHERE IN ANY WAY WITHOUT FIRST CONTACTING OUR STAFF. THIS IS TO ENSURE THE ACCURACY AND COMPLETENESS OF THE INFORMATION.